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Geographic Characteristics of the 13 Colonies

By Susan Rickey, eHow Contributor

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The 13 original colonies of what would become the United States were divided into three geographical regions--the New England colonies, the Middle colonies and the Southern colonies. Within each region, the colonies exhibited similar climates, agricultural products, religious practices, manufacturing products and [natural resources](#) . The geographic characteristics of the colonies within each region shared many congruent features, also.



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The New England Colonies




The New England colonies consisted of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island. They were located in the northern region. Along the coastline, the land was flat.

Continuing inland in these colonies, hills and mountains were encountered. The land was rocky, which made farming difficult. The colonists in this region had to rely on other means of providing for their [family](#)  because of the rocky land. Many New Englanders became fishermen, boat craftsmen, loggers and trappers.

The Middle Colonies



New York, Pennsylvania, [New Jersey](#)  and Delaware made up the Middle colonies. These colonies provided deep, safe harbors for ships. The geography of the land presented coastal plains, with gentle hills inland and mountains farther from the shore. The land was rich and fertile for farming, which the colonists succeeded at in this region.

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The Southern Colonies



The Southern colonies were Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina and Georgia. These colonies had a wide coastal plain leading to rolling hills. Mountainous regions were in the western sections of the Southern colonies. The land was rich for farming, and the season was long because of the climate.

Geography Influences the Economy

The lay of the land influenced the economies of each of these three regions. The New England colonies could not provide for their families by farming because of the land. They had to import food and use their natural resources to provide items to trade. The Middle colonies were called the breadbasket of the New World. The landscape made growing grains a profitable venture for these colonists. The Southern colonies used their land for cash crops such as tobacco and rice. They were able to export these items in exchange for cash with Britain. The only natural resource they needed to use to thrive was their good soil.

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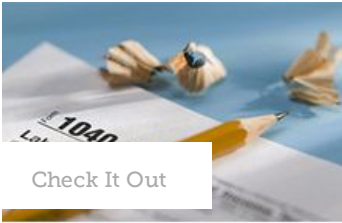


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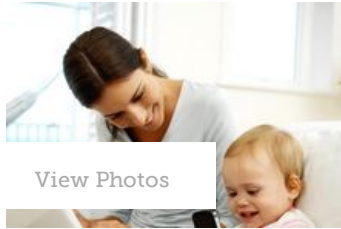
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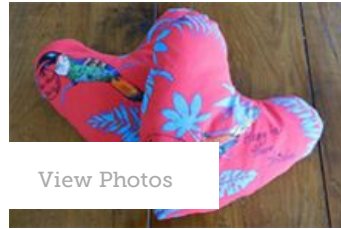
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